AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims indicating the current status of each claim and including amendments currently entered as highlighted.

Claims 1-17 (canceled)

Claim 18. (new) A method performed in a computer for securing an executable program file, wherein said program file is executable in a computer, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) designating a plurality of critical locations within the executable program file;

(b) arming the executable program file, thereby producing a modified executable program file by including a plurality of software procedures at said locations wherein each said software procedure performs at least one linked portion of the securing;

(c) storing said modified executable program file in storage operatively attached to a computer; and

(d) executing in a computer said modified executable program file, thereby executing said software procedures solely upon reaching said respective locations.

Claim 19 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein the securing includes at least one security function selected from the group consisting of checking authenticity, checking validity and authorization.

Claim 20 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein said executing includes self-decrypting said modified executable program file and secured digital content accessible by said executable program file.

Claim 21 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein said arming includes storing in at least one of said software procedures at least a reference to a key, wherein said key is required for accessing another of said software procedures.

Claim 22 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein solely said designating is performed by an owner of digital content accessible by said executable program module.

Claim 23 (new) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of, prior to at least a portion of said executing:

(e) verifying an authentication key accessible over the Internet.

Claim 24 (new) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of:

(e) upon said executing, accessing secured digital content stored on a digital medium, wherein at least one key required for said accessing is stored on said digital medium.

Claim 25 (new) The method of claim 24, wherein said at least one key is required to decrypt said secured digital content.

Claim 26 (new) The method of claim 24, wherein said at least one key includes a signature key which performs content authentication and a content key which is used to decrypt said secured digital content, wherein said content key and said signature key are stored on said digital medium.

Claim 27 (new) The method of claim 24, wherein said at least one key has at least one address stored solely in at least one of said software procedures.

Claim 28 (new) The method of claim 24, wherein said at least one key is provided by an address conversion module stored on said digital medium.

Claim 29 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein at least one of said software procedures is encrypted using at least one key.

Claim 30 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein at least one of said software procedures receives at least a portion of a key from at least one other of said software procedures.

Claim 31 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein a key is determined by selectably either a specific location within said software procedure or a calculation based on the software procedure, further comprising the step of:

(d) accessing another said software procedure using said key.

Claim 32 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein said software procedures are concealed within the executable program file.

Claim 33 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein said designating includes introducing flags within said executable program file, wherein said flags designate said critical locations within said executable program file.

Claim 34 (new) The method of claim 18, wherein portions of said executable program file are occluded by said software procedures.

Claim 35 (new) A digital storage medium including the modified executable program file produced according to the method of claim 18.

Claim 36 (new) A digital storage medium storing secured digital content accessible by a modified executable program file produced according to the method of claim 18.

Claim 37 (new) A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for securing an executable program file, wherein said program file is executable in a computer, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) designating a plurality of critical locations within the executable program file;

(b) arming the executable program file, thereby producing a modified executable program file by including a plurality of software procedures at said locations wherein each said software procedure performs at least one linked portion of the securing;

(c) storing said modified executable program file in storage operatively attached to a computer; and

(d) executing in a computer said modified executable program file, thereby executing said software procedures solely upon reaching said respective locations.